

Book Reviews.

STUDIES OF MENTAL AND CEREBRAL LESIONS. By Dr. Jules Cotard, ex-President of the Medico-Psychological Society, Assistant Physician at the Sanitarium of Vanves. Preface by Dr. Jules Falret. 8vo. Pp. 443. Paris, 1891. Librairie J. B. Baillière et fils, 19 Rue Hautefeuille.

A posthumous collection of Cotard's works, edited and prefaced by Falret, and followed by the various eulogies pronounced at his funeral by his many associates in the hospitals and philosophical and medical societies.

All bear evidence to Cotard's superior intelligence, great cultivation, intense love for philosophy, combined with a rare medical astuteness. As his student life was passed largely with Vulpian and Charcot, it is not astonishing that his researches should have been principally directed to the tracing of the causes of mental disturbance. His experimental and clinical study on the softening of the brain, although published as early as 1865, his inaugural dissertation on the Partial Atrophy of the Brain (1868) still maintain their places as classics, owing to their great intrinsic worth. Cotard was the first, in a long series of articles, to seek the underlying principle governing the various morbid mental conditions and their connecting links.

Before him these conditions had been considered in an isolated manner without reference to their reciprocal relations. He was also the first to clearly define the delirium of negation as a distinct type. This he considered to be founded upon psycho-sensorial disturbance. Everywhere in Cotard's writings, we find the influence of the teachings of Comte predominating, and governing largely his interpretation of his clinical cases. He believes that, as in aphasia, so can the various psychoses be differentiated, and that the conceptions of force, capacity, power, etc., prevalent among the insane can be legitimately attributed to generalized psychomotor excitation.

E. N. B.

THE PROVOCATIVE AGENTS OF HYSTERIA. By Georges Guinon, formerly Hospital Interne. 8vo. Pp. 392. Paris. Bureaux du Progrès medical, 14 rue des Carmes. A Delahaze et Lecrosnier Place de l'Ecole-de-Médecine, 1889.

Our author is peculiarly adapted to his task of tracing the exciting causes of hysteria, by the analytical and painstaking work necessitated by the preparation for the competitive, admission examination for the Paris hospital internat, to which succeeded many years of a most exceptional clinical education under such men as Charcot, Bouchard, Cornil, and others, whose scientific researches were in the direction of the determination of final causes. The present work is divided into two parts, and comprises in all eighty-five cases illustrative of the manifold causes determining the hysterical manifestation. Each history is analyzed in its appropriate place, and such conclusions deduced as the facts would best warrant. Gathering together the scattered links, Guinon, in the second part of his

treatise, synthetizes his previous findings in order to show that the syndrome, which had been displayed as an effect of such varied causes as emotional excitation, nervous shock, general and infectious diseases, debilitating causes of no matter what nature, is justifiable of the title hysteria.

He, moreover, shows that hysteria may be co-existent with many nervous diseases resulting from well determined pathological lesions, and that two or more series of symptoms may be synchronous although mutually independent and distinguishable.

The only plausible explanation of the fact that the neurosis is always one and the same in its manifestations, independently of the nature of its determining cause, lies in the fact that its existence depends upon an inborn and hereditary predisposition which requires but an opportune awakening to display itself with its personal variation. The study of a patient's ascendants, therefore, is absolutely requisite in tracing the causation of his hysterical tendency, which is, in all probability, dependent upon a vitiated nutrition of his nervous system.

E. N. B.

COMPLETE WORKS OF J. M. CHARCOT. Hemorrhage and Softening of the Brain, Metallotherapy, and Hypnotism, Electrotherapy. Vol. ix. 8vo. Thirty-four figures intercalated in the text, and thirteen plates. Pp. 571. Bureaux du Progrès médical, 14 rue des Carmes. Lecrosnier et Babé, Place de l'Ecole-de-Médecine, Paris, 1890.

A series of abstracts of articles written either by Charcot alone or with collaborators, and appearing originally in society memoirs or in medical journals. The would-be student of the subject-matter will surely object to the form in which these articles are presented, little or no effort being made by the editor other than to completely exhaust the list of Professor Charcot's achievements, while the reader is constantly obliged to clothe the skeleton with flesh, and otherwise animate it with his previously acquired knowledge, derived, it is true, in many cases from Charcot himself.

We have presented us, moreover, many articles upon the same subject, culled from various contemporaneous publications, in which the fundamental points differ little if at all from each other, so that in turning the pages of the present volume, we are constantly confronted by the tabulation of the same facts. This is, as will be readily admitted by the unprejudiced mind, somewhat monotonous, unless to the reader, in whom the hero-worshipping tendency may awake the desire to imitate the Mohammedan in carefully guarding all scraps of paper least, perchance, some inspired word might be lost. To the truly faithful, however, old friends are always welcome, even when they are but resurrections of transition forms whose living spirit has, thanks to metempsychosis, long since inhabited the more perfected being.

E. N. B.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BRAIN—Doctrines of the Strassburg School; Doctrines of the Italian School. By Jules Soury, of the National Library, Lecturer at the Technical School of Superior Studies (Hautes-Etudes). 8vo. Pp. 464. Paris. Bureaux de Progrès médical, 14 rue des Carmes, Lecrosnier et Babé, Place de l'Ecole-de-Médecine, 1891.